2008-03490/

metrovancouver

MEDIA RELEASE

4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, Canada V5H 4G8 604-432-6200

May 12, 2008

Coexisting with Bears: Everyone's Responsibility

VANCOUVER: The coming of spring means bear sightings—and bear encounters—are possible in many Metro Vancouver parks and communities. To help prevent and manage these encounters safely, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks has produced a handy guide for coexisting with bears.

"We are all responsible for keeping bears wild," says Gayle Martin, Chair of Metro Vancouver's Parks Committee, "there are steps we can take to reduce negative encounters in parks, recreational areas and at home."

"What About Bears?" includes information on bear behaviour, tips on avoiding bear run-ins and practical ways to "bear-proof" your home, such as securing your garbage, removing bird feeders during warmer months and sprinkling compost with lime on your property to reduce odours.

Residents north of the Fraser River are most likely to come in contact with bears this season. As our communities absorb the wilderness, hungry bears can be expected to enter urban areas in search of food. This raises the risk of property damage and injuries or death to the bear or in rare cases, to humans. Trails and picnic areas in many regional parks and in the LSCR also present the chance of bear encounters.

"Bears are wild animals and should be treated with respect," says Martin.

The brochure was produced by Metro Vancouver in cooperation with member municipalities and Province of BC's Bear Smart Community Program. The brochure is available at regional park kiosks and online at metrovancouver.org/parks

- 30 -

For more information, or for copies of the brochure:
Metro Vancouver Info Center: 604-432-6200

To report any wildlife-human interactions:
Conservation Office Services: 1-877-952-7277

Media Contact:
Bill Morrell
Corporate Relations, Metro Vancouver
604-451-6107